

# Tips for Caregivers

Providing care for an elderly person or adult with a disability requires patience, time, and love. Too often, caregivers neglect themselves, and this affects their ability to provide care. The following questions may be used as a guideline by caregivers. If you answer “yes” to one or more of the following questions, you might consider talking with someone about finding the support you need to do the very important work you have undertaken.

- Are you deprived of rest?
- Are you neglecting your own health?
- Is constant surveillance required as part of your caregiving tasks?
- Have you turned to drugs or alcohol or increased their use to deal with stress?
- Have your feelings toward the person you care for become more negative?
- Is the person you care for physically or verbally abusive toward you?
- Does the person you care for need legal assistance with things like estates, trusts, or living wills, which may be beyond your knowledge?
- Are you overwhelmed because you are taking care of more than one person at a time?
- Are financial constraints interfering with your ability to follow medical advice?
- Are problems from your family’s history resurfacing and contributing to the problem?
- Does your spouse resent the amount of time you spend as a caregiver?
- Are you confused, fearful, or angry as a result of being a caregiver?
- Is your family failing to communicate regarding the division of responsibilities?

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**Note:** Referral services are available through the following organizations or programs:

- ✓ United Way – Information and Referral
- ✓ State Long-Term Ombudsman
- ✓ Alzheimer’s Association
- ✓ Meals-on-Wheels
- ✓ SeniorNavigator.org (online)

*(Adapted from “Taking Care of Aging Family Members: A Practical Guide” by Wendy Lustbader and Nancy R. Hooyman (New York: The Free Press, 1994).*